

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

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SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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USMISSION GENEVA

USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 16821

LIMDIS NOFORN

VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL; GENEVA FOR CSCE DEL; SHAPE FOR
INTAF

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MCAP, PFOR, GW, FR, UK, NATO

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION AND THE UNITED
STATES: THE DEVELOPING EUROPEAN DIALOGUE

BEGIN SUMMARY. FRG AND UK SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED OUR
IMPRESSION THAT PARIS IS TALKING DISCREETLY WITH BONN
AND LONDON IN AN EFFORT TO FIND MODES OF EUROPEAN
DEFENSE COOPERATION SUITABLE TO A PERIOD OF WHAT THE
FRENCH FEAR WILL BE REDUCED AMERICAN TROOP PRESENCE.

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THE GERMANS, AND, OUR UK SOURCE SAYS, THE BRITISH, ARE

INTERESTED IN DISCREETLY EXPLORING SUCH SUPPLEMENTARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE FRENCH. BUT BONN AND LONDON ARE DETERMINED TO AVOID ANY MODE OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION THAT MIGHT BURDEN CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE US IN NATO OR THAT MIGHT INFUSE REALITY TO THE FRENCH FEAR OF AMERICAN TROOP REDUCTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN COMPARING NOTES WITH EMBOFF ON NOV 9 SCHEEL/JOBERT DISCUSSION AT PARIS AND NOV L5 ALL DAY FRG CABINET DISCUSSION OF EUROPEAN AND DEFENSE ISSUES AT SCHLOSS GYMNICH, USUALLY WELL-INFORMED BRITISH DIPLOMAT SAID HE HAD GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT, AFTER EXPOSTULATING TO SCHEEL ON THE UNRELIABILITY OF US STRATEGIC AND CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE GUARANTEES, JOBERT HAD STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THAT DEFENSE COOPERATION MUST ALSO BE INCLUDED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION TO BE ELABORATED BY 1980. OUR SOURCE NOTED REFERENCES TO THIS EFFECT IN THE REVISED FRENCH DRAFT ATLANTIC DECLARATION (USNATO 5444 AND 5435). HE THOUGHT IT UNLIKELY THAT JOBERT HAD FILLED IN ANY OF THE DETAILS CONCERNING POSSIBLE FORMS FOR SUCH EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION, SAYING, AS HAD DEFMIN ASST. SECRETARY WIECK DURING RECENT VISIT TO BONN OF PM DIRECTOR WEISS (BONN 16593 (EXDIS), THAT PARIS APPEARED TO BE ENGAGED IN A PROBING PROCESS BOTH WITHIN THE GOF AND DISCREETLY WITH OTHER WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, TO DETERMINE THE MODE OF SUCH FUTURE COOPERATION THAT MIGHT BEST CORRESPOND TO FRENCH INTERESTS. LIKE WIECK, BRITISH OFFICIAL THOUGHT THE FRENCH WERE SHOPPING FOR A FORUM THAT WOULD AFFORD THE LARGEST WEIGHT TO FRANCE'S MOST VISIBLE CARD -- NUCLEAR WEAPONS -- AND THAT WOULD PERMIT "A BIT OF DISTANCE" BETWEEN SUCH COOPERATION AND THE NATO ORGANIZATION. ALSO LIKE WIECK, WHO MADE HIS COMMENTS TO US AFTER RPT AFTER THE SCHEEL/JOBERT ENCOUNTER, UK OFFICIAL EMPHASIZED THAT HMG LIKE FRG ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO AVOIDING ANY ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS FOR EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION THAT COULD BURDEN NATO ARRANGEMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EITHER ALLIED POLITICAL COOPERATION OR MILITARY INTEGRATED COMMAND STRUCTURE.

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2. BRITISH REP SAID EUROPEAN DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE FUTURE FORMS OF DEFENSE COOPERATION SO FAR REMAINED IN INCIPIENT STAGE, BUT BEEPS EMANATING FROM SCHEEL/JOBERT AND GYMNICH MEETINGS SUGGEST WE ARE ENTERING A MORE ACTIVE PHASE. THE FRENCH, STILL APPARENTLY UNWILLING TO JOIN EUROGROUP BUT ANXIOUS FOR ARMAMENTS COOPERATION, HAVE SOUGHT TO PERSUADE THEIR PARTNERS TO SHIFT THIS EUROGROUP ACTIVITY TO THE WEU. BONN AND LONDON, WE

ARE TOLD, WILL CONTINUE FIRMLY TO RESIST THIS PLOY, BUT
ARE THINKING OF USING THE CARROT OF FRENCH AD HOC
COOPERATION WITH EUROGROUP ON ARMS COOPERATION IF PARIS
WOULD ENGAGE WITH ITS PARTNERS IN WEU IN DISCUSSIONS
OF SECURITY AND DEFENSE PROBLEMS. SUCH AN EXTENSION OF
EC POLITICAL COOPERATION, WHICH THE IRISH AND FRENCH
ARE PARTICULARLY RELUCTANT TO COUNTENANCE IN THE EC
POLITICAL COMMITTEE, MIGHT BE FEASIBLE IN THE WEU.

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3. WHILE OUR SOURCES CONCEDE THAT THE BIG THREE WEST
EUROPEAN CAPITALS ALL HAVE VARYING MOTIVES FOR TURNING
TO THE WEU MECHANISM, BRITISH AND GERMAN SOURCES SAY

THIS INSTRUMENT NONETHELESS COULD FILL A PERCEIVED NEED AT A GIVEN POINT. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT IS OF INTEREST THAT ON NOV 19 JOBERT WILL BE THE FIRST FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER IN SOME TIME TO ADDRESS THE WEU ASSEMBLY. WE ALSO HAVE NOTED REPORT IN NOV 16 ATLANTIC NEWS, APPARENTLY DRAWN FROM FRENCH SOURCES, THAT "THERE WOULD BE LITTLE JUSTIFICATION FOR MAINTAINING A RELATIVELY LARGE APPARATUS FOR CONTROLLING GERMAN TROOPS AND ARMAMENTS (UNDER THE WEU TREATY) AT A TIME WHEN SEVERAL WEU PARTNERS FEAR THAT THE FRG IS CUTTING SECRET

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(SIC) ITS MILITARY EFFORTS." THE AN REPORT CONCLUDES THAT, IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, "IT IS MORE PROBABLE THAT IT WILL BE PLANNED TO REDUCE PROGRESSIVELY THE WEU ARMAMENT CONTROL REGULATIONS."

4. WE ARE INFORMED THAT THIS RANGE OF TOPICS WAS DISCUSSED AT THE FRG GYMnich CABINET MEETING AND, ALSO, IN RECENT SPD BUNDESTAG FACKTION MEETINGS. THE OVERALL CONCLUSION SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THAT THE KEY TO GERMAN SECURITY IS AND WILL FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE REMAIN THE US NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL GUARANTEE, AND THAT MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY OFFSET ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE CONCLUDED TO HELP THE USG MAINTAIN ITS COMMITMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, AND WHILE CONTINUING TO FOLLOW THE SAME PUBLIC LINE, THE FRG WILL BE READY TO EXPLORE IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE WITH PARIS SUCH SUPPLEMENTARY MEASURES OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION, WITHIN RPT WITHIN AN OVERALL NATO CONTEXT, AS MAY FURTHER ENHANCE GERMAN SECURITY AND EXTEND THE PARAMETERS OF EUROPEAN UNION. BUT WIECK AND OUR BRITISH SOURCE SAY THE EMPHASIS MUST REMAIN ON SUPPLEMENTARY ARRANGEMENTS THAT WILL NOT BURDEN NATO.

5. OUR BRITISH SOURCE SAYS THE ABOVE DESCRIBED GERMAN APPROACH IS WHOLLY CONSISTENT WITH THAT OF LONDON. HE ADDS THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING CARRINGTON'S PIQUE IN COMMONS LAST SPRING FOLLOWING DEBRE'S LE POINT COMMENTS CONCERNING POSSIBLE ANGLO/SAXON NUCLEAR COOPERATION, BRITAIN CLEARLY REMAINS INTERESTED IN EVENTUALLY CONCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS ON JOINT TARGETING AND PRODUCTION AND A "NUCLEAR FORCE HELD IN TRUST FOR EUROPE." HOW ALL THIS MIGHT DEVELOP WILL DEPEND, HE ADDED, ON POLITICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND DOCTRINAL QUESTIONS, NONE OF WHICH HAS YET BEEN DISCUSSED IN DEPTH BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS. THE ATTITUDES OF WASHINGTON AND BONN WILL BE CRUCIAL. BUT OUR SOURCE EMPHASIZED THAT EUROPEAN NUCLEAR COOPERATION ALSO MUST BE DEVELOPED ONLY IN THE OVERALL CONTEXT OF

THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE.

6. IN CONCLUDING, OUR BRITISH SOURCE ATTRIBUTED
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RECENT FRENCH INCLINATION TO WAFT VAGUE IDEAS ON
DEFENSE COOPERATION TOWARD THEIR EUROPEAN PARTNERS TO
FEARS IN PARIS THAT THE AMERICAN TROOP PRESENCE WILL
BE REDUCED SOON AND IN SIGNIFICANT MAGNITUDE. OUR
SOURCE SAID THIS CONCERN, AND ACUTE FRENCH AWARENESS
THAT THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IS INDISPENSABLE BOTH TO A
SAFE BALANCE OF POWER WITH RUSSIA AND A SATISFACTORY
(FOR PARIS) RELATIONSHIP WITH GERMANY, MAY AT LEAST

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PARTLY EXPLAIN THE JOBERT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BLAST AT SUPERPOWER CONDOMINIUM ACCOMPANIED BY EMPHASIS THAT THE US TROOPS SHOULD REMAIN AT THEIR EUROPEAN POSTS. OUR SOURCE SPOKE OF JOBERT RIDING TWO HORSES, AND FEARING THAT THE US HORSE IS PULLING AWAY.

7. COMMENT: OUR GERMAN (AND BRITISH) SOURCES BELIEVE THE FRENCH ARE VERY BITTER THESE DAYS, IN VIEW OF THE INTENSE DESIRE IN PARIS TO FORM A DISTINCT EC IDENTITY LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE PRIMARILY TO FRANCE, YET COGNIZANT OF GROWING GERMAN POWER AND A DEPENDENCE ON A UNITED STATES WHICH IS LIKELY TO STRETCH FAR INTO THE FUTURE AND WHICH, IN FRENCH JUDGMENT, IS LIKELY TO BE SECRET

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INCREASINGLY UNDEPENDABLE. IN THIS LATTER ASPECT -- THE QUASI-PERMANENCE OF EUROPEAN DEPENDENCE ON THE US IN THE SECURITY FIELD BUT THE INCREASED FEAR OF REDUCED AMERICAN PRESENCE -- OUR SOURCES ADMIT THAT THE FRENCH CONCERNS ARE UNITED WITH THEIR OWN. IT IS JUST THIS EMERGING CONSENSUS OF CONCERN THAT HAS STIMULATED THE NEW DIALOGUE ON DEFENSE, WITHIN, OR AS THE FRENCH MIGHT HAVE IT, ALONGSIDE NATO. HILLENBRAND

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